

National Fire Prevention Week at Navajo Nation



Figure 1: Darryl Wilson and Phillip James, Fuels Technician work together to provide information at the Northern Navajo Nation Fair in Shiprock, NM.

During National Fire Prevention Week, October 4-10, 2015, the BIA Fire and Aviation Management and Navajo Nation Fire and Rescue Services teamed up to promote fire safety awareness to adults and youth.

Smokey Bear, Sparky the Dog, Darryl Wilson, BIA Navajo Region, Wildland Fire Management Specialist, and Lieutenant Jeff Morgan, Navajo Nation Fire and Rescue teamed up to provide training and education to local area residents in Window Rock and Fort Defiance, Arizona.

During the week, they hosted an open house at the fire department, and made public appearances at fair booths and schools to promote fire safety. Fire safety classes were also conducted to teach students what to do in the event of a structural or wildland fire.

Mr. Wilson and Lieutenant Morgan provided two half-day fire safety sessions at the local fire station. During the structure safety sessions, the proper use, maintenance and handling of smoke detectors were discussed. In addition, students reviewed and practiced fire safety emergency procedures, such as "Stop, Drop and Roll." During the wildland fire awareness portion, Mr. Wilson led activities that showed how to make your home Firewise and also showed parents easy ways to prepare for a wildfire using "Ready, Set, Go" material. These fire safety sessions attracted distant Arizona residents from Chinle, Tsalie, Round Rock, and Indian Wells. A total of 70 adults and youth participated in these events during National Fire Prevention Week.

Looking ahead, many attendees requested additional training and assistance for both structural and wildland fire preparedness. The overall experience of fire prevention week was positive. It gave the community an opportunity to promote public awareness of fire safety, increased public support for prevention programs, and produced requests for more information and contact at our distant and local communities.

In wildland fire and law enforcement, one of the keys to success is working together to accomplish common goals. During the week, the events that took place also strengthened our partnership between the Fire department and BIA Fire and Aviation management. Working together, our programs were able to accomplish more and also, learn about the important work structure and wildland firefighters do on a daily basis.